

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 3684

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU, NATO

SUBJECT: THIRD COUNTRY SUPPORT FOR MAINTAINING OPIUM BAN

1. STRONG US STAND AGAINST TURKEY'S RESCINDING POPPY
BAN HAS HAD LITTLE SUPPORT FROM OTHER NATO MEMBERS, WHICH
STAND TO SUFFER FROM RENEWAL OF TURKISH OPIUM

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PRODUCTION. ONLY FRG AND UK HAVE REGISTERED CLEAR

OPPOSITION, AND THEY HAVE MADE ONLY ONE CALL EACH AT FOREIGN MINISTRY. CANADA HAS MERELY EXPRESSED HOPE THAT IF BAN NOT MAINTAINED, "EFFECTIVE CONTROLS" WOULD BE APPLIED. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, OTHER MEMBERS HAVE NOT DECLARED THEMSELVES.

2. THESE AND OTHER NATO PARTNERS HAVE GOOD REASONS, IN OUR VIEW, TO TAKE ACTIVE ROLE IN PERSUADING TURKS THAT POPPY BAN MUST NOT BE REPEALED. REASONS ARE THESE:

A. NATO ITSELF WILL FACE SEVERE PROBLEM IF BAN RESCINDED, DUE TO VIRTUAL CERTAINTY THAT CONGRESS WILL DEMAND END OF US MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID TO TURKEY. TURKEY WILL THEN HAVE TO LOOK FOR OTHER SOURCES OF AID - WHICH COULD INCLUDE THOSE OUTSIDE NATO - OR CONSIDER MOVING TOWARD MORE NEUTRAL STANCE. AT SAME TIME, TURKEY MIGHT RETALIATE BY CLAMPING DOWN ON, OR EVEN CLOSING, US MILITARY FACILITIES IN TURKEY WHICH ARE IMPORTANT FOR NATO. TURKEY'S RESENTMENT MIGHT ALSO LEAD TO RETALIATION AGAINST US IN POLITICAL FIELD ALSO. ALL IN ALL, US-TURKISH CONFRONTATION OVER OPIUM WOULD ADVANCE SOVIET OBJECTIVE OF DISCORD AMONG ALLIES AS MEANS OF WEAKENING NATO.

B. RESUMPTION OF POPPY CULTIVATION WOULD RAISE RISK OF HEALTH OF POPULATIONS OF MOST NATO COUNTRIES. NO SYSTEM OF CONTROL LIKELY TO WORK IN TURKEY; IT DIDN'T IN PAST; ILLICIT TRAFFIC WILL REMAIN MUCH MORE PROFITABLE THAN LEGAL PRODUCTION. FARMERS BENEFIT LITTLE. CROOKS HAVE A BONANZA. WESTERN EUROPE CERTAIN TO BE DAMAGED AS MUCH AS US, BEING CLOSER TO TURKEY.

C. NATO COUNTRIES COULD PLAY VERY EFFECTIVE ROLE IN AVERTING END OF POPPY BAN. TURKEY NORMALLY RESPONSIVE TO WESTERN EUROPEAN OPINION. DIPLOMATIC DEMARCHES AND PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENTS EMANATING FROM NATO COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE STRONG EFFECT HERE - MUCH MORE, WE THINK, THAN NATO GOVERNMENTS BELIEVE. FURTHERMORE, AND AGAIN CONTRARY TO PREVALENT WESTERN EUROPEAN OPINION, GAME IS NOT OVER. ALTHOUGH FOREIGN PRESS GENERALLY HAS PORTRAYED

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DECISION ON BAN AS ALREADY TAKEN, AND ALTHOUGH MOMENTUM HERE CLEARLY IN THAT DIRECTION, FACT IS THAT GOT HAS NOT YET TAKEN FINAL DECISION AND HAS PROMISED NOT TO TAKE SUCH DECISION FOR AT LEAST THREE MORE WEEKS.

D. BY LETTING US CARRY ON THIS STRUGGLE WITHOUT VISIBLE AND VOCAL PARTNERS, OTHER "VICTIM COUNTRIES" ARE ALLOWING TURKS TO PRESENT DISTORTED PORTRAYAL OF POPPY BAN'S

RECISION AS "RESISTANCE TO US DOMINATION". THUS, OUR PARTNER'S SILENCE WEAKENS OUR CAPACITY TO PROTECT THEM FROM RENEWED FLOW OF TURKISH NARCOTICS.

3. WHAT WE NEED TO HELP PREVENT RECISION OF BAN IS CLEAR SHOW OF STRONG INTERNATIONAL OPPOSITION TO ANY RESUMPTION OF POPPY GROWING IN TURKEY, REGARDLESS OF "CONTROLS". THIS OPPOSITION SHOULD MAKE ITSELF FULLY FELT IN BILATERAL CONTACTS AND IN NATO ITSELF. FOR MAXIMUM EFFECT, WE WOULD HOPE THAT OPPOSITION WOULD SURFACE ALSO IN PUBLIC DOMAIN OF NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS AND PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENTS.

4. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT INSTRUCT POSTS IN NATO CAPITALS TO APPROACH HOST GOVERNMENTS, DRAWING ON ABOVE, AND URGE ACTIVE ROLE IN PERSUADING TURKEY TO MAINTAIN OPIUM POPPY BAN. DEPENDING ON WHETHER MAJORITY SUPPORT DEVELOPS, WE WOULD RECOMMEND ALSO THAT USNATO EXAMINE FEASIBILITY OF DISCUSSING ISSUE IN NATO FORA.

5. CONCURRENTLY, WE BELIEVE US SHOULD INTENSIFY OWN EFFORTS WITH TURKS, AS FOLLOWS:

A. DURING TIME TURKISH DELEGATION TO CENTO MINISTERIAL MEETING IS IN WASHINGTON THIS MONTH, ALL U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO ARE IN CONTACT WITH DELEGATION SHOULD BE ALERT TO OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPRESS ON DELEGATION MEMBERS US OPPOSITION TO RECISION OF BAN.

B. HIGH DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS SHOULD CALL IN AMBASSADOR ESENBEL TO ASK WHAT ACTION TURKISH GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO OUR AIDE MEMOIRE OF APRIL 10 REGARDING POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE BY IBRD FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FORMER POPPY GROWING REGION (ANKARA 2739).

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C. IF FEASIBLE, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR BOTH SECRETARY KISSINGER AND DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER SEPARATELY TO CALL IN ESENBEL TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER PROSPECT OF DAMAGE TO US-TURKISH RELATIONS AND TO RESTATE US OPPOSITION TO RECISION OF BAN.

D. DEPARTMENT SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN MIGHT BE BEST MOMENT FOR PRESIDENT TO CALL IN ESENBEL TO EXPRESS HIS OWN CONCERN ON THIS ISSUE.

E. WHEN TURKISH GENERAL STAFF CHIEF GENERAL SANCAR VISITS U.S. IN EARLY JUNE, HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS IN CONTACT WITH HIM SHOULD ASSURE HE HAS CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MILITARY AID IF BAN RESCINDED.

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